A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, February 24. 1708.

IN theſe murmuring Days I am not ignorant, that it will be a dangerous Task to attempt to cheque the railing Humour that is gone out among us— And before I undertake it, I am ſecure of two Things—*Firſt*, To have a Storm of Railery and ill Language from thoſe I oppoſe; and *Secondly*, To have neither Thanks or Reward from thoſe I ſerve—— And in ſhort, Gentlemen of all ſides, I frankly tell you, I equally contemn them all, I neither ſeek Reward, nor ſhun Reproach; I am a Volunteer to Truth, and long ſince have been prepar'd for Martyrdom in her Cauſe.

The Parliament having lately examin'd into the Affairs of *Spain*, found a miſerable Defect in the Forces provided for that Service—And according to the general Method of Parliamentary Proceedings, humbly addreſs'd Her Majeſty, that this Deficiency might be both examin'd into, as to what was paſt, and rectify'd for the future; the Service of *Spain* at this Time being of the utmoſt Conſequence to the Nation—— As may be ſeen by their Addreſs printed with the Votes.

Her Majeſty, according to her known Goodneſs, in Anſwer to this Addreſs, promiſes the Houſe a particular Examination of the Fact, and to cauſe it to be laid before the Houſe——— Which is now accordingly done, and in the Concluſion of her Majeſty's Anſwer you have theſe Words;

Her Majeſty aſſures Her ſelf, it will be very evident no Care has been wanting to ſupport the War in Spain *and* Portugal *in the moſt effectual Manner.* Vide, Votes of Parliament, Fol. 160.

In

In the Interval of this Tranſaction, and before an Anſwer could be obtain'd to this Enquiry, *a very fair Method of treating her Majeſty, by the Way*, what an Allarm has this made over the whole Nation, and how particularly buſie have our *Sham-Whigs* been to exaggerate this Matter as a Cheat and Fraud upon the Nation: I ſhall enter into none of the printed Railery, and the open Affronts to the QUEEN, as well as to the reſt of the Perſons concern'd, *nothing but the mildeſt and beſt Government in the World could have born with it*; but I deſire to ask our Scandal-Printers, and thoſe eſpecially, who calling themſelves *Whigs*, uſe the Nation thus, two or three Queſtions.

1. Was it not in Juſtice, as well as good Manners, a Debt due to your Governours to have with-held your Cenſures, till you ſaw, whether the Thing could be fairly anſwer'd or no, whether really the Fact was true or no, and whether it was the Fraud or Villany of Perſons employ'd, or the Conſequence of unavoidable Neceſſities, which Circumſtances would make clear, and which no Dilligence or Application could prevent?

   Who do you gratifie in theſe Clamours? 'Tis the Complaint of the Party, that the *Whigs*, as they call them, *a Curſe on all Party-Diſtinctions, they have almoſt ruin'd us*, are employ'd? —And are theſe *Whigs*, that rail thus before they know, and condemn, unheard, both the QUEEN, and all thoſe Her Majeſty has employ'd? No, no— Let them tell me what End they ſerve, and who they gratifie; if they do not, I can tell them, and this will explain it? Do not the *Tories* and *High-Flyers*, *Strange Alteration!* buy up, diſperſe into the Countries, and carry into all their Societies our pretended Whig-Papers, and are fond of them: And thus you aſſiſt the wicked Party, who are buſie; *firſt*, ſpreading the Contagion of Diſcontent before the Fact, on which it is grounded, is examin'd; and *ſecondly*, boaſting of the Diviſion they think they have found among the *Whigs*, on which they promiſe themſelves the Ruin of the Party, while they are ſpitting Poiſon in one anothers Faces—Miſerable Generation! what are you driving at, who take an Occaſion, from the ill Humours you gratifie in the People, to hazard the Ruin of your Country?

   Let us come now to the Matter of Fact; it is granted, there was 29395 Men provided for by Parliament, to be the Force to be ſent to *Spain* and *Portugal* for the carrying on the War there for the Year 1707, as is alledg'd in the Addreſs of the Houſe of Commons, nor is there any Fear that I ſhall gratifie the Hopes of thoſe People, who expect, I ſhall offend the Houſe of Commons in this Affair; there is no Occaſion at all for me, or any one elſe, to claſh with the Houſe; I am too ſenſible of what is repeated in that Addreſs, *Viz. That the reſtoring the* Spaniſh *Monarchy to the Houſe of* Auſtria, *and thereby the Ballance of Power in* Europe *was the principal Occaſion of the preſent War, and that on the Succeſs thereof, not the Trade and Tranquility, but even the Security of* Great Britain *does in a great Meaſure depend*; and this the QUEEN alſo in the Anſwer joyns in, and therefore let us know, *Her Majeſty can never be wanting to continue her utmoſt Endeavours to proſecute it with Vigour and Effect*——Thus all agreed in theſe things, and yet all that follow may be true, and ſo it will appear preſently.

   1. It may be true, that there has been a Deficiency of the Troops in *Spain*, and that they have fallen ſhort of the Numbers which were provided for by Parliament, and ſo conſequently the Addreſs of the Commons may be very juſt as to the General.
   2. It may be true, *I do not ſay it is*, tho if I did, I have her Majeſty's Authority for it; *that this Matter has not been fully ſtated to the Houſe*, and conſequently the Repreſentation being imperfect to the Houſe, they might, *for no Body of Men is infallible*, draw up an imperfect Scheme from it.
   3. It may be true, That notwithſtanding all the real Deficiences, both as to the Numbers of Men, and the Time of ſending them, or of their Arrival in *Spain*,

Spain, yet that *no Care may have been wanting*, &c. and this I have the QUEEN's Majesty's Authority for, *not only that it may be so, but that it really is so*, in the last Paragraph of the said Answer, *Viz. Her Majesty assures Her Self, it will be very evident that NO CARE HAS BEEN WANTING to support the War in* Spain *and* Portugal *in the most effectual Manner.*

4. If these Things may and are true, as I refer to the Judgment of the most impartial Observers of Things, then most vile and scandalous are the Arts of those People, who are filling us with Clamours at the Mismanagement of this Affair, and pointing on those People as Robbers and Plunderers of their Country, who upon due Examination have made it appear, they have faithfully discharg'd their Duty, and done their Utmost, tho' meeting with unsuperable Difficulties, they may not have been able to comply with Circumstances.

And now upon the whole, what are we a-doing? That, allowing no Circumstances for any Miscarriage, are immediately condemning and raging at every Man that is employ'd, whether he has done his Duty or no, whether we good-natur'd, unchristian Wretches learn it of our Brethren the *Turks* or no, I will not determine? ——

I know, if any Man reproves you for this, what follows; he is an Emissary, he writes to palliate the Crimes of great Ones; very well, and what's he that is suggesting Crimes upon them, without being able to make them out, and spreading those Crimes as publick Grievances, to raise the Mob against the Government —— And where is your Authority now for this, and where your Proof of Fact?

Our Authority, says the railing Author; Have we not the Vote in Parliament, that there was but 8000 Men or thereabout, instead of 29395 the Parliament provided for? —And have we not their Address to her Majesty to prevent the like for the future, as in another Case? —— Is not this our Authority?

No Gentlemen of *Billingsgate*, no Authority at all, and the Reason is to be seen in both the Common's Address and the QUEEN's Answer, both which look quite another Way.

1. The Commons having found, by the casting up of the Accounts given them, a Deficiency of Forces, what do they do—Like Men of Justice, Men of Honour, and like the exact Proceedings of a House of Commons, desire to know the Reason of Things, before they condemn Persons, or censure; and therefore their Address is,

" That her Majesty would be pleas'd " to order an Account to be laid be- " fore the House, how it come to pass, " that there were no more *English* " Forces in *Spain* and *Portugal* at the " Time of the Battle of *Almanza*? " *Votes of Parliament, Fol.* 157.

This has some Equity in it; this cannot be an Authority for railing at Frauds, and crying out Rogues and Cheat, and flying in the Face of the Government, for not punishing Villains, before they know whether there is any Villany or no.

2. The QUEEN's Answer tells us now, the Matter has not been fully stated to the House— If a sick Man was to go to them for Help, supposing them an Assembly of Doctors in Physick, and of the best Skill in the World, yet if the Man gives them a wrong Account of his Distemper, they could not give him a right Prescription; Parliaments are no more infallible than Churches, and the best Body of Men in the World can but judge like Men, by what of a Case is laid before them: Now, if the Case has not been fully stated to the House, as by her Majesty's Answer is supposed, it can be no Offence to the House, to say, they could not state it fully to Her Majesty, and indeed the House shew'd their great Moderation in this Case, in first addressing to her Majesty to have the Case examin'd, and then it was Time to punish, when the Fact was enquir'd into.

But

But theſe clamouring People, flying in the Face of all Manner of juſt Methods, cry out, no Body is puniſh'd, the Nation betray'd, deſcant upon the vaſt Deficiency, ſpread the Peiſon of the Reproaches over the whole Nation, and the *Jacobites* come into the Cabal; and of one *Whig* Paper that has taken this unjuſt Freedom, 'tis publickly known, that three eminent *Jacobites* bought each 100, to diſperſe for the Good of their Cauſe in their reſpective Countries againſt the Election of Members of Parliament—And theſe call themſelves *Whigs*, tell us they write for the Good of the Nation, who have been abuſed in this Article of the War with *Spain*——Tell them 20000 Men have been paid for, which have not been furniſhed, and that the Government puniſhes no Body.

And after all, Gentlemen, when the Matter comes to be examin'd, and the Particulars caſt up, it appears, and you have her Majeſty's own Words for it;

1. That this Matter has not been fully ſtated to the Houſe.
2. That Her Majeſty aſſures her Self, no Care has been wanting to ſupport the War in *Spain* and *Portugal* in the moſt effectual Manner.

Thus you ſee, how this poor Nation is treated, what reſtleſs Endeavours are uſed to fill us with Jealouſies and Suſpicions, what Parties joyn, and what Tools they work with to make the Nation unealie! I have been forward enough at all Times to complain, when the Publick has been abuſed by the Treachery of Inſtruments, and all honeſt Men would have Knaves detected; but to judge before we hear, and condemn Men before they anſwer for themſelves, not only is unjuſt, but always ſmells of an Intrigue; and in this Caſe 'tis evident, the Plot is to divide, diſturb and diſcompoſe the People, and carry on the fatal Party-Strife, that has often bid fair for the Nation's Deſtruction.

I ſhall enter in my next into the Caſe it ſelf, as ſtated in her Majeſty's Anſwer to the Commons Addreſs, wherein the Villany of theſe common Diſturbers will more plainly appear.

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